

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00184 01 OF 02 091616Z

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 184

DEPT REPEAT AS APPROPRIATE

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR GR CY TU OREP (BRADEMAS AND SARBANES)

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMEN BRADEMAS AND SARBANES PRESS
CONFERENCE ATHENS.

1. CONGRESSMEN JOHN BRADEMAS AND PAUL SARBANES HELD PRESS CONFERENCE 11AM JAN 9 AT USIS OFFICES ATHENS WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY ABOUT TWENTY GREEK AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, INCLUDING CORRESPONDENTS FOR NY TIMES, STAR-NEWS AND CBS. REQUEST FOR A CONFERENCE INITIATED BY CONGRESSMEN AND LASTED ABOUT ONE HALF HOUR, TERMINATING ABOUT 1140 HOURS LOCAL. AFTER INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS BY EACH CONGRESSMAN, JOURNALISTS QUERIED THE TWO REPRESENTATIVES ON A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES. INFORMAL EMBASSY SUMMARY FOLLOWS:

2. IN OPENING STATEMENTS, BOTH REPRESENTATIVES STRESSED THEIR PLEASURE AT GREECE'S RETURN TO A DEMOCRATIC AND FREELY FUNCTIONING PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM. REPRESENTATIVE BRADEMAS REMINDED JOURNALISTS THAT HE WAS AMONG THOSE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO DEMONSTRATED DISTRESS AT THE OVERTHROW OF GREECE'S PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS SEVEN YEARS AGO. HE ALSO EXPRESSED HIS DEEP INTEREST IN THE TRAGEDY OF CYPRUS AND EMPHASIZED FACT THAT ONE REASON FOR HIS CURRENT TRIP IS TO VISIT CYPRUS AND SEE FOR HIMSELF THE SITUATION THERE. BRADEMAS ALSO EXPLAINED TO JOURNALISTS

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 00184 01 OF 02 091616Z

FACT THAT USG OPERATES UNDER A SYSTEM OF "SEPARATION OF

POWERS" AND THAT REGARDING U.S. POLICY TOWARDS CYPRUS IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS HELD ONE POINT OF VIEW WHILE MAJORITY OF CONGRESS HAS SUPPORTED DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW. HE UNDERLINED FACT THAT HE AND REPS. SARBANES AND ROSENTHAL REPRESENT MAJORITY VIEW IN CONGRESS ON CYPRUS ISSUE. REP. BRADEMAS CONCLUDED HIS STATEMENT BY EXPRESSING HOPE THAT "IN COMING DAYS AND WEEKS THERE WILL BE A MOVE TOWARD GREATER AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE BRANCHES OF USG ON CYPRUS ISSUE" AND THAT "NOT TOO FAR OFF PEACE AND FREEDOM WILL BE RESTORED IN CYPRUS".

3. IN HIS STATEMENT, REP SARBANES EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH REP BRADEMAS VIEWS AND EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAD "TRIED HARD" TO CHANGE POLICY OF USG DURING PERIOD OF MILITARY RULE IN GREECE. HE REITERATED THEME OF USG SEPARATION OF POWERS AND PRESENTED AS EXAMPLE THE DISPUTE BETWEEN EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES SINCE SEP 1974 WHEN SERIES OF VOTES ON TURKISH AID ISSUE TOOK PLACE. HE CONCLUDED STATEMENT BY CATEGORIZING CYPRUS TRAGEDY AS "HUMAN PROBLEM OF ENORMOUS DIMENSIONS".

4. DURING QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD, CONGRESSMEN WERE ASKED ON WHAT BASIS THEY FELT "OPTIMISM" REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES ON CYPRUS ISSUE. REP BRADEMAS STATED THREE REASONS FOR VIEW. (1) CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS NOV 74 SUGGESTED THERE LIKELY TO BE GREATER RATHER THAN LESS SUPPORT FOR BRADEMAS/SARBANES VIEW ON CYPRUS; (2) A SENSE AND FEELING THAT "DEPARTMENT OF STATE AS ANXIOUS AS OTHERS TO SEE A SETTLEMENT" SINCE INTER ALIA IT HAS OTHER IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS TO DEAL WITH; (3) A SENSE AND HOPE THAT "OBJECTIVE FACTORS" ARE NOW MOVING IN A HOPEFUL DIRECTION.

5. TO THE COMMENT OF ONE JOURNALIST THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAS EXPRESSED VIEW THAT CONGRESSMEN ARE "GIVING HIM HARD TIME ON CYPRUS" REP SARBANES EXPRESSED REGRET THAT PRESIDENT SHOULD SO CATEGORIZE THEIR CONGRESSIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 00184 01 OF 02 091616Z

ACTIVITIES. HE STATED THAT IN ANY EVENT "WE INTEND TO PRESS FORWARD". SARBANES ARGUED THAT EACH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT MUST ACCOMMODATE ITSELF TO THE OTHER ESPECIALLY WITHIN CONTEXT OF "REALITIES OF POLITICAL SITUATION IN U.S. HE SPECIFICALLY DREW ATTENTION TO NEW CONGRESS WHICH WILL "EVEN BE STRONGER IN ITS SUPPORT OF OUR POSITION." WHEN QUERIED AS TO HOW HE WOULD RATE SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PERFORMANCE ON CYPRUS, BRADEMAS STATED THAT

HE HAD INDEED BEEN CRITICAL OF SECRETARY'S VIEWS, BUT HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT MR KISSINGER WOULD NOW BECOME MORE ACCOMMODATING TO CONGRESSIONAL VIEWS. IN ACADEMIC PARLANCE, REP BRADEMAs STATED THAT WERE HE SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PROFESSOR, HE WOULD "NOT GIVE HIM A PASSING GRADE ON CYPRUS" DESPITE HIS SUCCESS IN OTHER FIELDS.

6. WHEN PRESSED FOR CLARIFICATION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND CONGRESS ON CYPRUS, REP BRADEMAs EXPLAINED THAT DEPT OF STATE "DOES NOT LIKE CONGRESS IMPOSING CONDITIONS ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING FOREIGN POLICY." REP SARBANES THEN INTERJECTED THAT CONGRESS WAS VERY SPECIFIC IN ITS MILITARY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION AND FEELS THAT LEGAL REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED. THERE APPEARS TO BE A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE, REP SARBANES EXPLAINED, IN THEIR TWO VIEWS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF U.S. LAW. IN ANY EVENT, SARBANES CONTINUED, "WE MUST NOW DEAL WITH THE MATTER AS IT IS AND WE WILL PRESS FOR A JUST SOLUTION." IN LATTER CONNECTION, SARBANES TOOK POSITIVE VIEW OF FACT THAT MESSRS. DENKTASH AND CLERIDES HAD JUST ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD MEET JAN 14 TO COMMENCE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. REP BRADEMAs THEN INTERJECTED AS FINAL NOTE ON QUESTION THAT "I AM NOT SO INTERESTED IN ATTACKING SECY KISSINGER AS I AM IN ACHIEVING A GOOD SOLUTION TO CYPRUS PROBLEM."

6. WHEN PRESSED FURTHER FOR MORE SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONGRESS AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH, REP SARBANES INDICATED THIS MIGHT BECOME CLEARER AS THE FEB 5 TURKISH MILITARY AID CUT OFF DATE APPROACHES. IN ANY EVENT HE TOLD JOURNALISTS THE U.S. AMBASSADORS TO GREECE, TURKEY AND CYPRUS ARE NOW BACK IN WASHINGTON AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 ATHENS 00184 01 OF 02 091616Z

"WE BELIEVE THERE IS NOW A SENSE OF URGENCY AND CONCERN ON PART OF THE EXECUTIVE WHICH HAS NOT BEEN PRESENT DURING THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS--AND THIS IS A WELCOME INDICATION.

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00184 02 OF 02 091715Z

44

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 184

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7. BOTH REPRESENTATIVES STATED THEY HAD MET WITH PM CARAMANLIS, CENTER UNION LEADER GEORGE MAVROS AND DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF INTER ALIA DURING COURSE THEIR VISIT HERE. THEY ALSO NOTED THEY HAD "LEFT WORD" WITH ANDREAS PAPANDREOU. REP SARBANES NOTED IN ADDITION THAT THEY HAD MET WITH TRADE UNION LEADERS HERE AND HAD EXPERIENCED "CONSTRUCTIVE TALKS" WITH THEM. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT A STRONG TRADE UNION SECTOR IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE OPERATION OF A FREE DEMOCRACY. IN A QUICK QUERY ON THE CONGRESSMEN'S CATEGORIZATION OF THE CLERIDES/DENKTASH TALKS, REP SARBANES DESCRIBED THEM AS "AN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE TO A CYPRUS SOLUTION."

8. BOTH REPRESENTATIVES WERE REQUESTED TO ASSESS CURRENT STATE OF GREEK/U.S. RELATIONS. REP BRADEMAS STATED FORCEFULLY THAT THERE MUST OCCUR A CHANGE FROM THE CURRENT STATUS QUO AND THAT IN THIS REGARD U.S. SHOULD MOVE MUCH MORE VIGOROUSLY TO ASSERT SUPPORT FOR THE FREE, DEMOCRATIC, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN GREECE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ONCE CYPRUS PROBLEM SOLVED U.S.- GREEK RELATIONS WOULD IMPROVE AND HE SPECIFICALLY OPINED THAT THEY WOULD PROBABLY "GET BETTER IN THE YEAR AHEAD." REP SARBANES EXPRESSED VIEW THAT RELATIONS WOULD EVOLVE IN A DIFFERENT FORM IN FUTURE AND THAT GREATER CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO MUTUAL RESPECT AND TO DEALINGS ON AN EQUAL LEVEL.
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 00184 02 OF 02 091715Z

HE FELT THAT SUCH CHANGED RELATIONS WOULD BE GOOD IN THAT THEY WOULD RESULT IN STRONGER AND HEALTHIER BONDS OF MUTUAL RESPECT. REP. BRADEMAS INTERJECTED AT THIS POINT THAT A SPECIAL FACTOR IN THIS REGARD IS GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN U.S.--THAT "FOR FIRST TIME IN MY MEMORY" GREEK-AMERICANS HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY AWAKENED

AND THEY WILL CONSTITUTE A FACTOR IN PROMOTING BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

9. TO JOURNALIST QUESTION WHETHER CONGRESSMEN WOULD SEEK TO IMPOSE GREATER CONTROLS ON CIA ACTIVITIES AS RESULT OF THAT AGENCY'S "INVOLVEMENT" IN SUPPORTING GREEK JUNTA AND ITS ACTIVITIES IN CHILE, REP BRADEMAS STRONGLY ASSERTED THAT HE FAVORS A JOINT HOUSE/SENATE COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE CIA ACTIVITIES. HE EXPRESSED VIEW FURTHER THAT CONGRESS HAS NOT DONE AN EFFECTIVE JOB PREVIOUSLY IN CONTROLLING AGENCY AND FURTHERMORE HE IS NOT SATISFIED WITH RECENT APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE BY PRESIDENT FORD TO INVESTIGATE AGENCY. HE STRESSED HIS VIEW THAT CONGRESS SHOULD BE "DEEPLY INVOLVED" IN AGENCY'S CONTROL AND OVERSIGHT. REP SARBANES AGREED, CITING CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS SEPARATE BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT TO INSURE THAT CIA "ADHERES TO ITS CHARTER AND CONFORMS TO BASIC ELEMENTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY" IN ITS ACTIVITIES ABROAD.

10. IN FINAL SERIES OF QUESTIONS, JOURNALISTS SOUGHT CONGRESSMEN'S VIEWS TOWARDS PRESENCE OF U.S. BASES IN GREECE. REP BRADEMAS ASSERTED THAT THIS ISSUE DEPENDS IN LARGE DEGREE ON GREEK GOVERNMENT AND GREEK PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES. SPECIFICALLY, HE EXPRESSED OPINION THAT U.S. BASES SHOULD NOT BE PRESENT IN GREECE SOLELY BECAUSE USG WANTS THEM HERE. HOWEVER, HE WENT ON, "IF GREECE FEELS THEY ARE IMPORTANT--THEN IT'S APPROPRIATE THATY THEY BE HERE." REP SARBANES, COMMENTING ON SAME QUESTION, NOTED THAT THIS ISSUE IS NOW UNDER CLOSE REEVALUATION AND THAT ITS RESOLUTION SHOULD PROPERLY BE FOUND WITHIN CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WHICH HE REFERRED TO PREVIOUSLY (MUTUAL RESPECT, ETC.). WHEN PRESSED FOR SPECIFICS AS TO WHAT THEY EXPECT WILL HAPPEN ON ISSUE, SARBANES INDICATED IT DIFFICULT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 00184 02 OF 02 091715Z

TO PREDICT FINAL DECISION UNTIL REEXAMINATION ACTUALLY TAKES PLACE. HOWEVER, HE CONCLUDED, THE DECISION WILL ULTIMATELY DEPEND ON POSITION AND POSTURE OF GREEK GOVERNMENT AND GREEK PEOPLE.

11. FULL TEXT PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE POUCHED. STEARNS

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